

Act I.

Shakespeare's famous play of love turned bad by unfounded jealousy, begins in Venice with Iago, a soldier under Othello's command arguing with Roderigo, a wealthy Venetian. Roderigo has paid Iago a considerable sum of money to spy on Othello for him, since he wishes to take Othello's girlfriend, Desdemona as his own.

Roderigo fears that Iago has not been telling him enough about Desdemona and that this proves Iago's real loyalty is to Othello not him.

Iago explains his hatred of Othello for choosing Cassio as his officer or lieutenant and not him as he expected.

To regain Roderigo's trust, Iago and Roderigo inform Brabantio, Desdemona's father of her relationship with Othello, the "Moor" which enrages Brabantio into sending parties out at night to apprehend Othello for what must obviously be in Brabantio's eyes, an abuse of his daughter by Othello...

Iago lies that Roderigo and not himself, was responsible for angering Brabantio against Othello, Iago telling Othello that he should watch out for Brabantio's men who are looking for him.

Othello decides not to hide, since he believes his good name will stand him in good stead.

We learn that Othello has married Desdemona. Brabantio and Roderigo arrive, Brabantio accusing Othello of using magic on his daughter.

Othello stops a fight before it can happen but Othello is called away to discuss a crisis in Cypress, much to the anger of Brabantio who wants justice for what he believes Othello has done to his fair Desdemona.

The Duke is in council with several senators discussing their enemy, the Turks (Turkish people). Brabantio complains to the Duke that Othello bewitched his daughter and had intimate relations with her.

Desdemona is brought in to settle the matter, Othello meanwhile explains how he and Desdemona fell in love. Desdemona confirms this and the Duke advises Brabantio that he would be better off accepting the marriage than complaining and changing nothing.

The Duke orders Othello to Cypress to fight the Turks, with Desdemona to follow, accompanied by the trusted Iago.

Roderigo despairs that his quest for Desdemona is over now that she is married, but Iago tells him not to give up and earn money instead; soon Desdemona will bore of Othello.

Act II

On Cypress, news comes to Othello and his party that the Turkish fleet has sunk in a recent storm. Everyone is overjoyed and heads off to celebrate. Iago talks with Roderigo, and convinces him that Desdemona's love for Othello will soon fade. Thus the only thing standing in the way of Roderigo wooing Desdemona is Cassio. Iago tells Roderigo that if he were to get Cassio into a fight then Othello would fire Cassio, leaving him with time to court Desdemona.

At the party, Iago begins pushing wine at Cassio, who has no head for drinking.

After much protesting, Cassio finally has a few. He gets very drunk, very quickly. He heads outside to get some fresh air. No sooner is he gone than a shout is heard outside. Roderigo runs in, pursued by Cassio. Montano, governor of Cypress, tries to stop the combatants, but is wounded by Cassio as Roderigo runs off. Othello enters and Iago recounts the whole tale. Othello strips Cassio of command, then helps Montano to the doctor. Cassio, distraught over the fight and its outcome, begs Iago for advice. Iago tells him to seek out Desdemona and get her to speak to Othello on his behalf.

Act III

Cassio pleads with Desdemona to help him get his position back. Iago and Othello, who have been checking the battlements, enter just as Cassio leaves.

Iago says "I like not that," and begins to allude to an affair between Desdemona and Cassio. Iago is vague enough that Othello cannot deny his words.

When Desdemona comes to call Othello to dinner, he says he has a headache. Desdemona brings out a handkerchief, a present from Othello which she holds dear, to try to help her husband. Othello knocks it from her hand as his jealousy begins to take hold. After they exit, Iago's wife Emilia enters. She picks up the handkerchief saying that Iago has asked her many times to steal it. When he gives it to Iago, he tells her to speak to no one of this. Once she is gone, he tells the audience that he is going to plant it

on Cassio. Othello comes in, demanding proof of Desdemona's unfaithfulness.

Iago tells him that he has seen a handkerchief in Cassio's hand that looks like the one that Othello gave to Desdemona. Othello, thinking Iago's intentions to be honest, believes every word.

Othello sets off to find Desdemona. When he does he demands to see the handkerchief. When Desdemona can't produce it, Othello says that it is enchanted. That it will keep a lover faithful as long as they have it, but if it is lost or given away, all bets are off. When she still can't produce the handkerchief, Othello takes it as proof that Desdemona is cheating on him.

The very end of the act has Cassio entering talking to Bianca, a prostitute with whom he has a relationship. He gives her a handkerchief that he found in his room and asks her to copy its pattern for him. Bianca asks if it is from another woman; Cassio says he doesn't know where it came from.

Act IV

Othello doesn't want to believe that Desdemona is cheating on him and demands more proof of Iago. Iago has Othello hide nearby as Cassio enters. Iago questions him about his love for Bianca in such a way that Othello overhears only enough to believe that they are talking about Desdemona. Once Cassio leaves, Othello vows that he will kill both Cassio and Desdemona. Iago, ever the true friend, pledges to help Othello in every way. Iago goes to Roderigo and says that all Roderigo has to do to win Desdemona is to kill Cassio.

Roderigo resists at first, but eventually goes along with Iago, warily. Othello accuses Desdemona openly of her affair. She denies it, of course. Othello is too far along to believe anything and tells her to go to bed and await him there. He goes out for a walk.

Act V

Outside the tavern where Bianca is staying, Roderigo attacks Cassio. However, he is not very good with a sword, and Cassio wounds him. Iago darts out from the shadows, stabs Cassio in the leg, and flees before he is seen. Cassio yells out in pain. Othello, a few streets over hears this and believes that Iago has killed Cassio, he heads off to Desdemona's bed.

Iago runs to Cassio's side, saying he came running at the sound of Cassio's yelling. Cassio points out Roderigo as one who attacked him, Iago quickly stabs Roderigo, killing him. Emilia enters and asks what happened. Iago sends her to Desdemona. Othello enters sleeping Desdemona's bedchamber. She awakes and Othello questions her as to any unconfessed sins she may still have. She says she has none. Othello accuses her of adultery again, and again she denies it. Because she wouldn't confess to the affair, Othello kills her by smothering her with a pillow. Emilia enters and after seeing what has been done, tells Othello that her husband has been leading him astray. Then she begins calling out for help because Othello has killed Desdemona. Iago, Montano, Cassio, and Lodovico, a politician from Venice, enter. Emilia rats out Iago and Othello tries to kill him but is restrained. Iago uses the chance to stab Emilia, killing her. Othello tries to kill Iago again and only wounds him. Rather than be taken back to Venice for a trial, Othello decides it would be better if he killed himself, and does so. He dies next to Desdemona after a last kiss.

Lodovico gives away Othello's possessions, gives governorship of Cyprus to Montano, and sentences Iago to death. He then says that he is going back to Venice with this unhappy news.